

**Columbia Toxics Reduction Working Group: Summary of Meeting (4/20/07)**  
**April 9, 2007**  
**Lacey, WA**

**Attendees:**

John Piccininni BPA  
Rachel Pecore, Columbia Riverkeeper  
Jill Leary, LCREP  
Steve Waste, NPPC  
Kevin Masterson, ODEQ  
Alec Maule, USGS  
Elena Nilsen, USGS  
Greg Fuhrer, USGS  
Jennifer Morace, USGS  
Tony Paulsen, USGS  
Ashley Burt, URS  
Mark Siipola, US ACE  
Andrew Kolosseus, WDOE  
James Thomas, Yakama Nation  
Rebecca Hawk Elwood, Yakama Nation  
Linda Bingler, PNNL  
Nancy Kohn, PNNL  
Yvonne Vallette, EPA

Bruce Duncan, EPA  
Lorraine Edmond, EPA  
Michael Watson, EPA  
Mike Cox, EPA  
Ann Williamson  
Socorro Rodriguez, EPA  
Andrew Kolosseus, WADOE  
Agnes Lut, ODEQ  
Dave McBride, WADOH  
Liz Carr, WADOH  
Dale Norton, WDOE  
Helen Rueda, USEPA  
Dale Norton, WDOE  
Jay Davis, USFWS  
Summer Goodwin, EPA  
Patti Howard, CRITFC  
Sylvia Kawabata, EPA

**Next Meeting:**

**Welcome, Purpose, Outcomes, Introductions, and Announcements**

The meeting was held in Lacey, WA and was hosted by the Department of Ecology. A special thanks to Andrew Kolosseus for coordinating the meeting. The meeting was opened by Socorro Rodriguez of EPA. Mike Cox EPA discussed the purpose, outcomes and agenda for the meeting (agenda attached)

Purpose: To provide clear direction for working group/subgroups and continue to share information on projects with the Basin

Desired Outcomes for the meeting:

- Common understanding of goals, direction, and work products for WG
- Information exchange
- Agreement on COCs
- Direction for subgroups

Announcements: LCREP and USGS announced the upcoming conference *Science to Policy: Many Perspectives, One River*, May 7-9, 2007 at Red Lion at the Quay, Vancouver, WA.

**Status of Action Items from December 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

- Formed steering committee and created an overview paper
- Put notes, presentations, etc on EPA website
- Ann Williamson will serve as the EPA senior manager on the working group
- Despite major cuts in the EPA ORD budget, the money for REMAP is still available but RFP is not yet out. It will be sent out to all group members as soon as possible.

- Data on Coastal EMAP and CRITFC data will be provided to USGS
- Subgroups presented their activities

### **Overview Paper**

The Steering Committee developed an overview paper for the working group that summarized the goal, scope, purpose, structure, work products, and decision making for working group. There was general agreement that the paper fairly characterized the working groups efforts but offered several suggestions. Several people suggested making it more clear that this is a long-term effort that will require sustained attention and resources. There was agreement on modifying the goal of working group to read as follows:

The goal of the working group is to prevent and reduce toxic levels in the Columbia River Basin; this includes reducing toxics in aquatic life that people eat and ensuring the survival, reproduction, and growth of fish and wildlife

The purpose of the working group was discussed and generally accepted:

- Information exchange.
- Provide work products (e.g., assist in the development of the State of the River Report on Toxics).
- Facilitate securing funds for projects. As an ad hoc group, the WG cannot receive money itself but we can help our members secure resources.
- Provide recommendations to agencies and organizations on projects if requested.

The group also discussed decision making. It was agreed that while the goal is consensus on issues, if not possible then EPA will make the decision on direction. There was a general discussion on the formation of the Steering Committee. The goal of the steering committee is to provide direction and leadership to the Working Group. The current members on the committee are representatives from EPA, LCREP, USGS, Yakama Nation, WADOE, ODEQ, NOAA, WADOH, and FWS.

### **State of the River Report**

The Working group discussed the purpose, timing, responsibility, resources, and work products for the report. It is hoped that the report can be completed by the end of 2008 if resources can be secured. There was discussion that a work product for the report should be on the potential effects/impacts on both human health and aquatic life from toxics. This is important in order to provide information to the public and decision makers on the nature and extent of the problems with toxics in the Columbia Basin. There was also discussion that an outline for the State of the River Report was needed in order to focus discussions in the individual subgroups and to provide some direction on the schedule and budget for the project.

### **Presentations (presentations on website)**

**Bruce Duncan EPA:** Bruce presented an update on the activities and some preliminary data on the Upper Columbia River Superfund Site. He discussed some the history and recent sampling activities. It was agreed that when more data is available that the group will ask Bruce back for further discussions.

**Agnes Lut ODEQ:** Agnes discussed the Willamette Mercury TMDL. She discussed that there are multiple sources of mercury with the average levels of mercury in bass exceed 0.35 ppm. EPA approved the TMDL in September 2006. Phase 2 of the project is scheduled to be completed by 2011.

**Rebecca Elwood Yakama Nation:** Rebecca presented an effort by the Yakama Nation to determine the effects of air deposition on cultural and natural resources. She discussed the damage the air deposition is having including damage to rocks and rock images and visibility. She also discussed the different sources of the air deposition in the area and the data on air quality over a several year period.

### **Contaminant and Media Subgroup**

Andrew Kolosseus (WADOE) presented the conclusions from the contaminant and media subgroup. The Subgroup was tasked with coming up with the contaminants of concern and information on which media to sample (see handout *Prioritization of Toxics*)

Contaminants of Concern (COCs) were divided into three tiers based on several factors. The three major factors included evaluating whether: 1) it was an existing problem; 2) is it an ecological threat, human health threat, or both; and 3) is there an implementation plan/reductions strategy in place for the COC. There was much discussion about the chemicals in the different tiers. Several suggestions were made by the working group for the subgroup to consider including: in the introduction provide more detail on the overall rationale of why the contaminants are placed in each of the Tiers and what these means for sampling; create a column in the larger table with a rationale for why each was prioritized in which way; expand contaminants list to include pathways and effects; look at an approach that emphasizes prevention rather than the curative when approaching the emergent toxics; consider adding personal care products along with pharmaceuticals; and consider which compounds could be tested together as a suite so as to get the most bang for the buck. The subgroup will meet again to discuss the comments and update the tables and approach as deemed necessary.

Subgroup Members: Andrew Kolosseus (WDOE); Jill Leary (LCREP); Lorraine Edmond (EPA); Jennifer Morace (ISGS); Agnes Lut (ODEQ); Helen Rueda (EPA); Lyndal Johnson (NOAA); Rachel Pecore (Columbia Riverkeeper); Jeremy Buck (FWS); Greg Fuhrer (USGS); Larry Gadbois (EPA); and Barbara Harper (CTUIR)

### **Data Subgroup**

Helen Rueda (EPA) circulated two maps: “Toxic Contamination Reduction Efforts in the CRB” and “Toxic Contaminant Sample Sites in the CRB”. There was a general discussion with several questions and actions that the data subgroup was asked to address before the next meeting: work with the Steering Committee to determine the minimum data required for the State of the River Report; develop better understanding of the different data sources and how they may be used (e.g., NW Water Quality Data Exchange; DOE Query manager; storet, USGA data); and discuss who would manage data, how, and the cost.

There was a general discussion on the Toxic Contamination Reduction Efforts map. The map will go on the website but it needs to be simplified. Several suggestions included: working with the Steering Committee to determine what actions to include on the map; Spokane and Wenatchee River TMDLs have not been approved, this should be corrected; include TMDLs that are approved and ones that are underway; and check to make sure that the red dots are actually current NPL sites.

Subgroup Members: Helen Rueda (EPA – Lead); John Piccininni (BPA); John Sands (DOE); Bruce Duncan (EPA); and Jill Leary (LCERP)

## **Sources Subgroup**

Mike Cox (EPA) led a discussion on the questions to be addressed by the sources subgroup. Linda Bingler will be the lead. The working group provided feedback on several questions and actions that the subgroup needs to address before the next meeting including: review past source identification efforts as potential prototype for moving ahead; develop goal for the group and its geographic scope with assistance from the Steering Committee; discuss the work products for the State of the River Report the subgroup can provide; develop a list of the potential sources of COCs including non-traditional sources such as salmon returning and sediment from dams; create a map of the sources; discuss if and how to use modeling to determine loadings of COCs; and how to characterize the sources and pathways for toxics.

Subgroup members: Linda Bingler (PNL – Lead); Helen Rueda (EPA); Mike Watson (EPA); Joanne Labaw (EPA); Brent Foster (Columbia Riverkeeper); Kevin Masterson (ODEQ); Andrew Kolossus (WADOE); and John Sands (DOE);

## **Monitoring Design Subgroup**

Lorraine Edmond (EPA) led a discussion on the next steps for the Monitoring Design subgroup. After discussion it was decided for now that this subgroup would be on hold until more progress is made on the other subgroups. The rationale was that the working group has limited resources and that we still need to address several questions prior to the long term monitoring design work moving forward.

## **Summary of Action Items**

### **1. General**

- EPA will work with the EMAP people to make a link to the data from the map on the coastal EMAP site

### **2. Overview Paper**

- Revise paper to include discussion that this is a long-term effort.
- Modify goal as discussed above.
- A key work product is to identify effects/impacts from toxics to both humans and aquatic life. Currently the paper is silent on evaluating the potential effects/impacts.

### **3. State of the River Report for Toxics**

- Develop an outline for the report using examples from the Puget Sound. The outline should include a timeline and budget for effort.
- Provide the outline to the Steering Committee for review and comment prior to the next meeting.
- Begin outreach to secure resources to complete report.

### **4. Contaminant and Media Subgroup**

- Meet to review and consider comments from working group and revise work as deemed appropriate.
- Present any changes and additional work at the next meeting.

### **5. Data Subgroup**

- Work with Steering Committee to determine what actions should be included on Toxic Reduction Actions map

- Meet to discuss questions posed by the working group and report back at the next working group meeting.

**6. Sources Subgroup**

- Work with Steering Committee to better define goals and geographic scope for subgroup.
- Meet to discuss the questions posed by the working group and report back at next working group meeting.